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Chairman: Mr. Gurirab (President of the General Assembly)

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Organization of the fifty-fourth regular session of the General Assembly, adoption of the agenda and allocation of items: memorandum by the Secretary-General (*continued*)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Organization of the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly, adoption of the agenda and allocation of items: Memorandum by the Secretary-General (*continued*) (A/BUR/54/1 and Add.1)

Section IV. Adoption of the agenda (continued)

Paragraph 47

1. **The Chairman** invited the Committee to continue its consideration of item 171 entitled "Need to examine the exceptional international situation pertaining to the Republic of China on Taiwan, to ensure that the fundamental right of its twenty-two million people to participate in the work and activities of the United Nations is fully respected".

2. The representatives of Burkina Faso, El Salvador, the Gambia, Honduras, Liberia, Malawi, the Marshall Islands, Nicaragua, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Solomon Islands and Swaziland had asked to participate in the discussion of item 171 in accordance with rule 43 of the rules of procedure.

3. *At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Kafando (Burkina Faso), Mr. Meléndez-Barahona (El Salvador), Mr. Jagne (Gambia), Mr. Orellana Mercado (Honduras), Ms. Dukuly-Tolbert (Liberia), Mr. Rubadiri (Malawi), Mr. Relang (Marshall Islands), Mr. Castellón Duarte (Nicaragua), Mr. Wilson (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines), Mr. Horoi (Solomon Islands), and Mr. Dlamini (Swaziland) took places at the Committee table.*

4. The representatives of Afghanistan, Argentina, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belize, Brazil, Chad, Dominica, Egypt, Guatemala, Guyana, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mexico, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Sao Tome and Principe, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, the Sudan, Suriname, the Syrian Arab Republic, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tunisia, the United Republic of Tanzania, Yemen and Zambia had asked to participate in the discussion of item 171. Rule 43 of the rules of procedure did not apply. He took it that the Committee wished to accede to the requests.

5. *It was so decided.*

6. *At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Andkhoie (Afghanistan), Mr. Petrella (Argentina), Mr. Hossain (Bangladesh), Ms. Korneliouk (Belarus), Mr. Leslie (Belize), Mr. Biato (Brazil), Mr. Abakaka (Chad), Mr. Richards (Dominica), Mr. Khairat (Egypt), Mr. Estévez-López (Guatemala), Ms. Elliott (Guyana), Mr. Fulci (Italy), Ms. Arystanbekova (Kazakhstan), Ms. Odera (Kenya), Mr. Al-Awdi (Kuwait), Mr. Kittikhoun (Lao People's Democratic Republic), Mr. Magoaela (Lesotho), Mr. Hamida (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), Mr. Macedo (Mexico), Mr. Enkhsaikhan (Mongolia), Mr. Mra (Myanmar), Mr. Bhattarai (Nepal), Mr. Haque (Pakistan), Mr. Moore (Saint Kitts and Nevis), Mr. Hunte (Saint Lucia), Mr. Ferreira (Sao Tome and Principe), Mr. Van Schalkwyk (South Africa), Ms. Menéndez (Spain), Mr. de Saram (Sri Lanka), Mr. Erwa (Sudan), Mr. Kerpens (Suriname), Mr. Mekdad (Syrian Arab Republic), Mr. Čalovski (The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), Mr. Chaouachi (Tunisia), Mr. Mwakawago (United Republic of Tanzania), Mr. Al-Sindi (Yemen) and Ms. Sinjela (Zambia) took places at the Committee table.*

7. **Mr. Ferreira** (Sao Tome and Principe) said that the Republic of China on Taiwan was a country with an elected and democratic government and a strong economy. It was also one of the major investors in East Asia and was deeply involved in humanitarian work worldwide. The United Nations should not exclude 22 million people from important multilateral agreements and membership of international organizations solely on the basis of General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI) of 25 October 1971. The Assembly must address the situation and take measures to ensure that the Republic of China on Taiwan had a direct and representative voice in the United Nations and its related agencies.

8. **Ms. Dukuly-Tolbert** (Liberia) said that, while her delegation was under no illusion that General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI) would be reversed any time soon, it felt strongly that the United Nations and other international organizations should consider alternative ways of accommodating the 22 million people of the Republic of China on Taiwan. For example, the Republic of China on Taiwan could be given observer status in the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the World Health Organization.

9. In the light of the need to address the consequences of the adoption of General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI), the Committee should recommend that the Assembly should establish an ad hoc committee for that purpose.

10. **Mr. Mra** (Myanmar) said that the question of China's representation in the United Nations had been settled once and for all by the adoption of General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI). That resolution recognized the Government of the People's Republic of China as the sole legitimate representative of China at the United Nations. The question of Taiwan was purely an internal affair of China and did not

warrant any interference. For that reason, his delegation opposed the inclusion of item 171 in the agenda of the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly.

11. **Mr. Hossain** (Bangladesh) said that the authority of General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI), which had resolved the question of China's representation in a comprehensive manner, must be safeguarded. His delegation therefore strongly opposed the inclusion of item 171 in the General Assembly's agenda.

12. **Mr. Kafando** (Burkina Faso) said that it was high time to address the consequences of General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI), which had deprived the Republic of China on Taiwan of membership of the United Nations. For 50 years, the Republic of China had demonstrated its highly responsible behaviour as a subject of international law. For 50 years, it had had a legitimate democratically elected government. In keeping with the principle of self-determination, the people of Taiwan should have the freedom to choose their own path of development.

13. The international community should be guided by the principle of universality and ensure that the Republic of China was represented at the United Nations and thus was able to participate in the exercise of its international rights and obligations. His delegation supported the inclusion of item 171 in the agenda of the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly. The Assembly could subsequently consider establishing a working group to examine the situation.

14. **Mr. Baali** (Algeria) said that the question of China's representation in the United Nations had been resolved by General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI), which had confirmed the principle of one China. There was therefore no reason to consider the inclusion of item 171 in the agenda of the current session of the General Assembly.

15. **Mr. Relang** (Marshall Islands) said that, from the point of view of human rights, the international community should support the right of the people of the Republic of China on Taiwan to participate in the work of the United Nations. His delegation was in favour of including item 171 in the agenda and establishing an ad hoc group to consider the possibility of revising General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI).

16. **Mr. Bhattarai** (Nepal) said that the question of China's representation had been settled once and for all by the General Assembly's adoption of its resolution 2758 (XXVI). The inclusion of item 171 in the agenda of the Assembly would undermine not only the authority of that resolution but also the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Since Taiwan was part of China, the Assembly's consideration of the item would constitute interference in the internal affairs of a State Member of the United Nations.

17. **Mr. Abakaka** (Chad) urged the People's Republic of China and the Republic of China on Taiwan to continue their positive dialogue in the interest of international peace and security. He said that the United Nations must acknowledge the reality that the People's Republic of China and the Republic of China on Taiwan had coexisted for 50 years and allow the 22 million inhabitants of Taiwan to be represented. The inclusion of the supplementary item would reflect the sweeping changes which had taken place on the international scene since the adoption of resolution 2758 (XXVI) in 1971, and would be consistent with the principles and ideals of the Charter of the United Nations. His delegation therefore strongly supported the draft resolution contained in annex II to document A/54/194 on the establishment of a working group of the General Assembly to examine thoroughly the exceptional international situation pertaining to the Republic of China on Taiwan.

18. **Mr. Jagne** (Gambia) said that the Government of the Republic of China on Taiwan had not been rendered extinct by the establishment of the Government of the People's Republic of China. Both Chinas had a defined territory, an effective Government and maintained diplomatic relations with other States. Therefore, resolution 2758 (XXVI) was fundamentally defective and one-sided and no longer relevant in the post-cold-war era. Moreover, the 22 million people of the Republic of China on Taiwan contributed significantly to global development, including technological development, and provided assistance to many countries. The United Nations should not be exclusionary but rather should constantly encourage new members to join. His delegation unreservedly supported the inclusion of the supplementary item, which provided an important opportunity to correct the wrongs of the past.

19. **Mr. Dlamini** (Swaziland) said that, ever since Swaziland itself had become a member of the United Nations, it had supported the right of the Republic of China on Taiwan to be represented at the United Nations, in keeping with the principles of international law, including the principle of sovereignty. General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI) was not a reflection of the reality of 1949, since it resolved only one question, namely, the right of representation for mainland China, and excluded the Republic of China on Taiwan. Many States had voted against that resolution in 1971; a number of others, which had been undecided, had abstained. The Organization was stubbornly ignoring the truth in continuing to support a resolution which

was detrimental to peace and security in the region and which unscrupulously denied representation to a country which had helped to establish it and had been a permanent member of the Security Council, as confirmed by Article 23 of the Charter of the United Nations. His delegation did not believe, as some were claiming, that the number of Member States advocating the inclusion of the supplementary item was insignificant; it called for the inclusion of the supplementary item and the establishment of a working group to amass evidence as to why resolution 2758 (XXVI) could not be revisited.

20. **Mr. de Saram** (Sri Lanka) said that his delegation's position was and had always been that there was only one China, namely, the People's Republic of China, which represented all the people of China at the United Nations, as provided in resolution 2758 (XXVI).

21. **Mr. Boisson** (Monaco) said that his delegation opposed the inclusion of the supplementary item.

22. **Mr. Horoi** (Solomon Islands) said that his delegation, a sponsor of the request for the inclusion of the supplementary item, welcomed the strong statement made by the representative of Senegal at the previous meeting. The working group proposed in the draft resolution would need to consider a number of questions, including whether or not the Republic of China on Taiwan, a multi-party democracy with a vigorous market economy and a major provider of overseas development assistance, met the criteria for membership in the Organization and whether it was a sovereign State. With respect to the latter issue, the Republic of China on Taiwan, which had not declared its independence but rather sought peaceful and democratic unification with the People's Republic of China, was no different from States Members of the United Nations that, for whatever reason, had chosen to limit their sovereignty. It also fitted the definitions of sovereignty recognized by modern scholars and experts on that subject.

23. Solomon Islands, which was near the Taiwan Strait, was concerned by the threats of military action made by the People's Republic of China, in violation of the Charter of the United Nations and General Assembly resolutions, including resolution 2758 (XXVI). Such threats endangered international peace and security and undermined the stability of the region.

24. His delegation supported the peaceful and democratic unification of the Republic of China on Taiwan and the People's Republic of China which, it believed, would be facilitated by the participation of the Republic of China on Taiwan in the work of the United Nations, an issue which, in fact, had first been raised by the People's Republic of China 50 years earlier.

25. **Mr. Castellón Duarte** (Nicaragua) expressed his delegation's support for the inclusion of the supplementary item and the establishment of a working group, since the Republic of China on Taiwan satisfied all the requirements for membership set forth in Article 4 of the Charter of the United Nations: it was a peace-loving State, accepted the obligations contained in the Charter and was able and willing to carry out those obligations. Since 1949, it had exercised sovereignty over the territory of Taiwan; its Government had been freely elected; it maintained diplomatic relations with various States; and it sought peaceful solutions to disputes. If the Republic of China on Taiwan were to join the United Nations, its contribution to the regular and peacekeeping budgets would be significant. Moreover, the Republic of China on Taiwan was currently a member of the Asian Development Bank, cooperated with the Inter-American Development Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and had been admitted as an observer to the Central American Integration System.

26. Consideration must be given as well to the situation of the 22 million people of the Republic of China on Taiwan, who were unable to benefit from the humanitarian work of the Organization in combating disease, natural disasters and drug trafficking. Indeed, that omission could be prejudicial to United Nations programmes. It was also unconscionable that the population of the Republic of China on Taiwan was excluded from the United Nations system of human rights protection.

27. His delegation supported both the admission of the Republic of China on Taiwan to the United Nations and the dialogue being pursued with a view to the reunification of the Republic of China on Taiwan and the People's Republic of China.

28. **Mr. Stanislaus** (Grenada) said that his delegation was proud to join the other delegations requesting the inclusion of the supplementary item that would return the Republic of China on Taiwan to full membership in the United Nations, without prejudice to the People's Republic of China. General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI) should be revisited in order to redress the wrong that had deprived the 22 million people on Taiwan of United Nations membership. The political and historical reality was that since 1949, the Republic of China on Taiwan and the People's Republic of China on the mainland had both shown tremendous economic growth and development under two different systems of political and social values, with neither exercising control over the other across the Taiwan Strait.

His delegation hoped that, until the ideal of unification was reached and the dream of one China was fulfilled, some method of peaceful coexistence across the Strait could be found.

29. **Mr. Moore** (Saint Kitts and Nevis) said that his Government did not presume to offer any remedy for resolution to any dispute which might exist between the Chinese people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait. He was sure that they had the capacity to solve such problems. The Republic of China on Taiwan, with its enviable economic progress and sound record in democracy, had a valuable role to play in international affairs. That was why his Government supported the inclusion of item 171 in the agenda of the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly.

30. **Ms. Arystanbekova** (Kazakhstan) said that the Government of the People's Republic of China was the sole representative of the people of China and that Taiwan was an inseparable part of China. Her delegation fully supported the statement of the People's Republic of China and opposed the inclusion of item 171 in the agenda.

31. **Mr. Kerpens** (Suriname) said that there was only one China. That issue had been resolved once and for all by General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI) and that was why his country continued to support the Government of the People's Republic of China as the sole representative of that country at the United Nations. There was no reason for the General Committee to recommend the inclusion of the item in the provisional agenda.

32. **Mr. Erwa** (Sudan) said that the proposal ran counter to the Charter of the United Nations and constituted blatant interference in the internal affairs of the People's Republic of China. The issue of representation of China had been resolved by General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI). His delegation therefore rejected the inclusion of the item in the agenda.

33. **Mr. Bogoreh** (Djibouti) said that the Government of the People's Republic of China was the sole representative of China and that Taiwan was part of China. His delegation, which respected the Charter and decisions of the United Nations, opposed the inclusion of the item in the agenda.

34. **Mr. Meléndez-Barahona** (El Salvador), noting that his country had friendly relations with the Republic of China on Taiwan, said that the political, economic and social realities of that country could not be disregarded and its exceptional situation should be taken into account.

35. **Mr. El-Awdi** (Kuwait) said that General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI) had resolved the issue and declared that the People's Republic of China was the sole representative of China at the United Nations. Any attempt to include the item in the agenda would be a clear violation of the resolution; it would also be tantamount to interference in China's internal affairs and a violation of its sovereignty. Kuwait recognized only one China, the People's Republic of China.

36. **Mr. Mekdad** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his delegation opposed the inclusion of the item in the agenda, since the issue had been resolved by General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI). Any attempt to create two Chinese States was an attempt to distort facts and constituted a violation of the territorial integrity of a Member State. The Syrian Arab Republic recognized only one China, the People's Republic of China.

37. **Mr. Enkhsaikhan** (Mongolia) said that there was no compelling reason for the proposed item to be included in the agenda. General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI) had restored the lawful rights of the People's Republic of China and had settled the issue of the representation of the Chinese people and Government at the United Nations. The proposal to include the item in the agenda of the current session not only contradicted political reality but also the principled decision taken by the General Assembly in 1971.

38. **Mr. Rubadiri** (Malawi) said that the Republic of China on Taiwan, which embodied the democratic principles that all States were trying to attain, no longer claimed to represent all of China but only its 22 million people. The part of resolution 2758 (XXVI) which excluded the Republic of China on Taiwan from the United Nations should now be revoked. The item should therefore be included in the agenda.

39. **Mr. Orellana Mercado** (Honduras) said that his delegation supported the request for the inclusion of the item in the agenda.

40. **Mr. Rosenthal** (Guatemala) said that his country, which maintained full diplomatic, commercial and cultural relations with the Republic of China on Taiwan, understood the logic behind the initiative under consideration. At the same time, it was committed to the objective of China's reunification. In that regard, it reaffirmed its policy of non-interference in the internal affairs of other States and wholehearted support for the peaceful settlement of disputes. It was to be hoped that the ongoing conversations between the Republic of China on Taiwan and the People's Republic of China would resolve the existing differences between the two parties. If the United Nations could in any way facilitate that process, his delegation would support the corresponding decisions.

41. **Mr. Macedo** (Mexico) said that his delegation supported the sovereignty and territorial integrity of China as well as the relevant General Assembly resolution. It therefore rejected the inclusion of the item in the agenda of the fifty-fourth session.

42. **Mr. Fulci** (Italy) reaffirmed his country's endorsement of General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI), which had recognized the People's Republic of China as the only lawful representative of China at the United Nations. He said his delegation supported the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of the People's Republic of China. It was for the Government of that country to seek a peaceful solution to problems relating solely to its internal affairs. Italy opposed the inclusion of item 171 in the agenda.

43. **Mr. Kim Chang Guk** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) said that, since the issue had already been resolved by General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI), the proposal to include item 171 in the agenda would constitute a violation of the Charter of the United Nations and interference in the internal affairs of the People's Republic of China. Taiwan was an inseparable part of China. As a divided country, the People's Democratic Republic of Korea opposed any action which could exacerbate the division of another country. The item should not be included in the agenda.

44. **Mr. Hamida** (Libyan Arab Republic) said that the General Assembly had settled the issue of representation: the People's Republic of China was the sole representative of China at the United Nations. The General Committee had refused to include the item in the agenda in the past and he hoped that the issue would not come up again in the future.

45. **Ms. Camara** (Côte d'Ivoire) said that, while her Government recognized the important role that the Republic of China on Taiwan played, it was not in favour of including the item in the agenda of the General Assembly. Her delegation favoured internal dialogue in order to resolve the question through peaceful means.

46. **Mr. Biato** (Brazil) said that General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI) had provided a definitive solution to the problem. His delegation therefore remained opposed to the inclusion of item 171 in the agenda.

47. **Mr. Al-Humaimidi** (Iraq) said that the Government of the People's Republic of China was the sole representative of the Chinese people. The inclusion of item 171 in the agenda of the fifty-fourth session would create a dangerous precedent regarding the way in which the United Nations dealt with questions relating to the internal affairs of countries. That would be a violation not only of the relevant General Assembly resolution but also of the Charter of the United Nations. His delegation therefore rejected the inclusion of the item in the agenda of the current session.

48. **Mr. Leslie** (Belize) said that Taiwan, whose population of 22 million was greater than that of three quarters of the States Members of the Organization, had coexisted peacefully with the People's Republic of China since the latter's founding in 1949. To deny its people the right to participate in the United Nations, the principal forum for dealing with international issues, would be contrary to the principles of the Charter. Belize therefore supported the proposal to include the item in the agenda.

49. **Mr. Gatilov** (Russian Federation) said that General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI) had definitively settled the matter of the representation of China at the United Nations. His delegation therefore did not support the proposal for the inclusion of the item.

50. **Ms. Korneliouk** (Belarus) said that Belarus supported the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the People's Republic of China, of which Taiwan was a part. It therefore opposed the item's inclusion in the agenda.

51. **Mr. Petrella** (Argentina) said that the question of the representation of China had been settled once and for all by the General Assembly in its resolution 2758 (XXVI). Indeed, Argentina had been one of the first States to have normalized relations with the People's Republic of China. His delegation therefore opposed the item's inclusion.

52. **Mr. Morel** (Seychelles) said that his Government opposed the inclusion of the item in the agenda.

53. **Mr. Zackheos** (Cyprus) said that by its resolution 2758 (XXVI) the General Assembly had definitively settled the matter of China's representation at the United Nations and his delegation therefore could not support the proposal for the inclusion of the item.

54. **Ms. Elliott** (Guyana) said that there was only one China, of which the legitimate representative was the Government of the People's Republic of China. Guyana, therefore, could not support the inclusion of the item. Moreover, other international and regional organizations should be guided by the decision taken by the United Nations on the matter.

55. **Mr. Van Schalkwyk** (South Africa) said that the issue of Taiwan was an internal matter for the Chinese people to resolve among themselves. His Government, which had ended its relations with the Republic of China on Taiwan, opposed the inclusion of the item in the agenda.

56. **Mr. Gotienne** (Congo) said that General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI) had settled the matter of China's representation at the United Nations. His delegation therefore opposed the inclusion of the item.

57. **Mr. Kittikhoun** (Lao People's Democratic Republic) said that there was only one China, of which the Government of the People's Republic of China was the sole legitimate representative. The issue had been definitively settled by the General Assembly in its resolution 2758 (XXVI). His delegation could not therefore support the proposal to include the item in the agenda.

58. **Mr. Alabrune** (France) said that his Government's position was based on its respect for General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI) and on the recognition of the Government of the People's Republic of China as the sole legitimate Government of China. His delegation was therefore not in favour of the inclusion of the item.

59. **Mr. Alimov** (Tajikistan) said that the matter of China's representation in the Organization had been settled by Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI). There was only one China, of which the sole legitimate representative was the Government of the People's Republic of China. His delegation therefore opposed the inclusion of the item.

60. **Ms. Menéndez** (Spain) said that, for reasons which had already been stated in the Committee, her delegation was not in favour of the proposal to include the item in the agenda.

61. **Mr. Mangoaela** (Lesotho) noted that the number of States requesting the inclusion of the item now before the Committee was declining each year and there was little point in continuing those efforts. Differences between the Government of the Republic of China on Taiwan and the Government of the People's Republic of China must be settled by the two Governments. His delegation was not in favour of the item's inclusion in the agenda.

62. **Mr. Dausá Céspedes** (Cuba) said that developments since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI) did not warrant a revision of the resolution, which must be respected in both letter and spirit. His Government did not support the proposal to include the item in the agenda.

63. **Ms. Sinjela** (Zambia) said that the Committee's annual ritual had become a futile exercise, since the issue of China's representation had been definitively settled by the General Assembly in 1971. There was only one China, whose sole legitimate representative was the Government of the People's Republic of China. Zambia was not in favour of the item's inclusion.

64. **Mr. Hunte** (Saint Lucia) said that recognition of Taiwan as a nation would be inconsistent with the tenets of sovereignty and nationhood. Moreover, General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI) had already recognized the Government of the People's Republic of China as the sole legitimate representative of China at the United Nations. Saint Lucia therefore opposed the inclusion of the item.

65. **Mr. Andkhoie** (Afghanistan) said that the matter of China's representation had already been settled by General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI) and his delegation could not therefore support the item's inclusion.

66. **Mr. Richards** (Dominica) said that the global picture in 1999 was radically different from the one that had existed in 1971 and the changes which had occurred in the intervening period could not be ignored. The Republic of China on Taiwan, by dint of the industry and commitment of its 22 million citizens, had succeeded in transforming itself into a pluralistic and democratic State whose economic aid and investment policies contributed enormously to the development of many countries. The refusal to examine the serious consequences of the exclusion of the Republic of China on Taiwan was a betrayal of the Organization's sense of justice and fairness. At the very least, the citizens of the Republic of China on Taiwan deserved a hearing and Dominica supported their legitimate request.

67. **Ms. Odera** (Kenya) said that Kenya supported the one China policy. Resolution 2758 (XXVI), by which the General Assembly recognized the Government of the People's Republic of China as the sole legitimate representative of China, remained valid today. Her Government could not therefore support the proposal to include the item in the agenda.

68. **Mr. Rosenstock** (United States of America) said that the well-known position of the United States on the matter had been reiterated at the highest level of the Administration of President Clinton. The three pillars of United States policy on the matter were that there was one China, that bilateral problems between the People's Republic of China and Taiwan should be resolved peacefully and that any pending issues between them should be resolved through dialogue.

69. **Mr. Chaouachi** (Tunisia) said that there was only one China and the issue of its representation had already been resolved by the General Assembly. His delegation was therefore not in favour of the item's inclusion.

70. **Mr. Wilson** (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines) said that General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI) was a travesty of justice and did not constitute a reasonable

solution to the problem of China's representation, since it merely settled the issue of the representation of the people of mainland China and not that of the 22 million people of the Republic of China on Taiwan. The Charter espoused the principle of the self-determination of peoples as the moral foundation for international peace, and the United Nations was the appropriate forum within which to discuss the principle of sovereignty. It was time to review resolution 2758 (XXVI) and the Committee should therefore recommend the inclusion of the proposed item in the agenda of the General Assembly.

71. **Mr. Mwakawago** (United Republic of Tanzania) said that Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI) remained valid. The argument contained in the proposed agenda item risked opening up difficulties about the existence of two sovereign States in the territory of China and must therefore be seen as an attempt to undermine both the Assembly's resolution and the territorial integrity of the People's Republic of China. The international community should not aggravate political problems within any territorial jurisdiction by encouraging its dismemberment. Indeed, the item under consideration should be submitted for inclusion in the agenda not annually but biennially. His delegation urged the Committee to reject the proposal.

72. **Mr. Čalovski** (The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) said that inclusion of the item in the agenda would have a positive impact on efforts to achieve the reunification of China through peaceful means. It was important for the United Nations to abide by the principles of its Charter, which provided for universal participation in the work of the Organization.

73. **Mr. Gonzáles** (Chile) said that the issue of China's representation in the Organization had already been resolved by the General Assembly and Chile therefore opposed the inclusion of the item.

74. **Mr. Ahmadi** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that the problem of China's representation had been resolved once and for all by the General Assembly in its resolution 2758 (XXVI). His delegation therefore could not support the proposal to include the item in the agenda.

75. **Mr. Al-Sindi** (Yemen) said that there was only one China, of which the Government of the People's Republic was the sole legitimate representative. Yemen therefore opposed the item's inclusion in the agenda.

76. **Mr. Khairat** (Egypt) said that the inclusion of the proposed item would be a violation of both Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI) and the sovereignty of China. His delegation therefore opposed the proposal.

77. **Mr. Grainger** (United Kingdom) said that his delegation had not been convinced by the arguments in favour of including the item. As it had done in previous years, the Committee should decide not to recommend the item's inclusion in the agenda of the General Assembly.

78. **Mr. Haque** (Pakistan) said that the Committee had for years engaged in the futile exercise of considering proposals for including in the agenda of the General Assembly the issue of China's representation. Once more, the debate had clearly established that Taiwan had no right to participate in the Organization and that there were no legal, moral or political grounds on which to overturn or review the Assembly's decision contained in resolution 2758 (XXVI). Indeed, any attempt to reopen the matter would constitute a violation of the Charter.

79. *The Committee decided not to recommend the inclusion of item 171 in the agenda.*

80. *Mr. Andkhoie (Afghanistan), Mr. Petrella (Argentina), Mr. Hossain (Bangladesh), Ms. Korneliouk (Belarus), Mr. Leslie (Belize), Mr. Biato (Brazil), Mr. Kafando (Burkina Faso), Mr. Abakaka (Chad), Mr. Richards (Dominica), Mr. Khairat (Egypt), Mr. Meléndez-Barahona (El Salvador), Mr. Jagne (Gambia), Mr. Estévez-López (Guatemala), Ms. Elliott (Guyana), Mr. Orellana Mercado (Honduras), Mr. Fulci (Italy), Ms. Arystanbekova (Kazakhstan), Ms. Odera (Kenya), Mr. Al-Awdi (Kuwait), Mr. Kittikhoun (Lao People's Democratic Republic), Mr. Mangoaela (Lesotho), Ms. Dukuly-Tolbert (Liberia), Mr. Hamida (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), Mr. Rubadiri (Malawi), Mr. Relang (Marshall Islands), Mr. Macedo (Mexico), Mr. Enkhsaikhan (Mongolia), Mr. Mra (Myanmar), Mr. Bhattarai (Nepal), Mr. Castellón Duarte (Nicaragua), Mr. Haque (Pakistan), Mr. Moore (Saint Kitts and Nevis), Mr. Hunte (Saint Lucia), Mr. Wilson (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines), Mr. Ferreira (Sao Tome and Principe), Mr. Horoi (Solomon Islands), Mr. Van Schalkwyk (South Africa), Ms. Menéndez (Spain), Mr. de Saram (Sri Lanka), Mr. Erwa (Sudan), Mr. Kerpens (Suriname), Mr. Dlamini (Swaziland), Mr. Mekdad (Syrian Arab Republic), Mr. Čalovski (The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), Mr. Chaouachi (Tunisia), Mr. Mwakawago (United Republic of Tanzania), Mr. Al-Sindi (Yemen), and Ms. Sinjela (Zambia) withdrew.*

Item 172

81. *The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include item 172 in the agenda.*

Item 173

82. **The Chairman** said that the representatives of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Namibia, Rwanda and Uganda had asked to participate in the discussion of item 173. Rule 43 of the rules of procedure did not apply. He took it that the Committee wished to accede to the requests.

83. *It was so decided.*

84. *At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Ileka (Democratic Republic of the Congo), Ms. Ashipala-Musavyi (Namibia), Mr. Kayinamura (Rwanda) and Mr. Odaga-Jalomayo (Uganda) took places at the Committee table.*

85. **Mr. Kayinamura** (Rwanda) sought the Chairman's guidance concerning the application of rule 14 of the rules of procedure to the request of the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo contained in document A/53/1048.

86. **Mr. Ileka** (Democratic Republic of the Congo) reiterated his Government's request that item 173, entitled "Armed aggression against the Democratic Republic of the Congo", should be considered in plenary meeting without being referred to a Main Committee.

87. **The Chairman** said that the question before the Committee was whether to endorse the General Assembly's decision to include the item in the draft agenda of the fifty-fourth session.

88. **Mr. Kayinamura** (Rwanda) pointed out that Article 12, paragraph 1, of the Charter provided that while the Security Council was exercising in respect of any dispute or situation the functions assigned to it in the Charter, the General Assembly should not make any recommendation with regard to that dispute or situation unless the Security Council so requested. Since the Council was currently seized of the situation in the Great Lakes region and of the efforts of the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) and of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), Rwanda opposed the inclusion of the item in the agenda. He would therefore welcome the Chairman's ruling on how the Committee should proceed.

89. **Mr. Odaga-Jalomayo** (Uganda) said that he supported the statement just made by the representative of Rwanda. The Committee should not jeopardize the initiatives that were currently under way to achieve a settlement of the conflict in the Great Lakes region. A decision to include the item in the agenda would only aggravate the situation.

90. **Mr. Ileka** (Democratic Republic of the Congo) said that the occupation of the eastern part of the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo by Rwanda and Uganda had brought untold civilian suffering. The international community must condemn the criminal acts committed by the aggressors, which violated all the norms of international humanitarian law, and call upon them to withdraw their troops.

91. **The Chairman** requested the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to confine his statement to the question of the inclusion of the item in the agenda.

92. **Ms. Ashipala-Musavyi** (Namibia) said that it should be possible to discuss the item pending the Committee's decision on whether to recommend its inclusion in the agenda.

93. **The Chairman** said, with reference to Article 12 of the Charter, that, while the Committee could not adopt any decisions or make any recommendations concerning a dispute or situation of which the Security Council was seized, it could discuss the matter.

94. *The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include item 173 in the agenda.*

95. *Mr. Ileka (Democratic Republic of the Congo), Ms. Ashipala-Musavyi (Namibia), Mr. Kayinamura (Rwanda) and Mr. Odaga-Jalomayo (Uganda) withdrew.*

Section V. Allocation of items

Paragraph 48

96. **The Chairman** drew attention to paragraph 48 of the memorandum by the Secretary-General (A/BUR/54/1), which stated that the allocation of items was based on the pattern adopted by the General Assembly for those items in previous years. The General Committee might wish to draw the General Assembly's attention to paragraph 4 of its decision 34/401, paragraph 5 of the annex to Assembly resolution 39/88 B, paragraph 6 of the annex to Assembly resolution 45/45, paragraphs 2 and 5 (b) and (d) of annex I to resolution 48/264, as well as paragraph 24 of the annex to resolution 51/241 concerning the allocation and clustering of items.

97. *The Committee decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to the above-mentioned paragraphs.*

Item 97

98. *The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that item 97, entitled "Question of East Timor", should be considered directly in plenary meeting, on the understanding that bodies and individuals having an interest in the question would be heard in the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) in*

conjunction with the consideration of that item in plenary meeting.

Paragraph 49

99. **The Chairman** drew attention to paragraph 49 of document A/BUR/54/1, which listed the items of the draft agenda that had not been considered previously by the General Assembly, and suggested that the Committee should pronounce itself on the recommendation that it should make regarding the allocation of those items recommended for inclusion in the agenda of the fifty-fourth session.

100. *It was so decided.*

Item 163

101. **Mr. Salamanca** (Bolivia) said that the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) was closely involved with issues concerning the environment and sustainable development. The organization's aim was to promote the sustainable use of natural resources and to influence policies designed to conserve the diversity of such resources. To that end, IUCN had found ways to involve specialized non-governmental organizations in its work by admitting as members such official bodies as government ministries in areas related to the environment and nature. He therefore requested the Committee to recommend to the General Assembly that the item should be considered directly in plenary meeting.

102. *The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that item 163 should be considered directly in plenary meeting.*

Items 166, 168 and 169

103. *The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that items 166, 168 and 169 should be considered directly in plenary meeting.*

Item 172

104. *The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that item 172 should be allocated to the Fifth Committee.*

Paragraph 51 (Item 10 of the draft agenda)

105. *The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that it should hear a brief presentation by the Secretary-General of his annual report on the work of the Organization on Monday, 20 September, as the first item in the morning prior to the opening of the general debate.*

Paragraph 52 (Item 12 of the draft agenda)

106. *The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the various parts of the report of the Economic and Social Council should be allocated in accordance with the suggestions made by the Secretary-General.*

Paragraph 53 (Item 18 of the draft agenda)

107. *The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that all the chapters of the report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples relating to specific Territories should be referred to the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee), thus enabling the Assembly to deal in plenary meeting with the question of the implementation of the Declaration as a whole.*

Paragraph 54 (Item 52 of the draft agenda)

108. *The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the item on the question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) should be considered directly in plenary meeting, on the understanding that bodies and individuals having an interest in the question would be heard in the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) in conjunction with the consideration of the item in plenary meeting.*

Paragraph 55 (Item 63 of the draft agenda)

109. *The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that item 63 should be allocated at an appropriate time during the session.*

Paragraph 56 (Item 76 of the draft agenda)

110. *The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the paragraphs of the report of the International Atomic Energy Agency dealing with the subject matter of item 76 should be drawn to the attention of the First Committee in connection with its consideration of that item.*

Paragraph 57 (Item 100 (h) of the draft agenda)

111. *The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the plenary meeting to commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of the operations of the United Nations Population Fund should be held on Wednesday, 27 October 1999, in the morning.*

Paragraph 58 (Item 107 of the draft agenda)

112. *The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the four plenary meetings devoted to the follow-up to the International Year for Older Persons should be held on Monday and Tuesday, 4 and 5 October 1999.*

Paragraph 59 (Item 110 of the draft agenda)

113. *The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the annual report of the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme on the operations, management and budget of the United Nations Development Fund for Women should be referred to the Second Committee for consideration under item 102 of the draft agenda.*

Paragraph 60 (Item 110 of the draft agenda)

114. **Mr. Gatilov** (Russian Federation) said that the decision of the Committee regarding the adoption of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women directly in plenary meeting should not create a precedent for the future.

115. **Ms. Yuan Xiaoying** (China) endorsed the statement made by the representative of the Russian Federation.

116. *The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that it should also consider item 110 directly in plenary meeting for the sole purpose of taking action on the draft resolution entitled "Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women" recommended to the General Assembly for its adoption by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1999/13 of 28 July 1999, on the understanding that it would not set a precedent.*

Paragraph 61 (Item 155 (a) of the draft agenda)

117. *The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that it should take note that the one-day plenary meeting to mark the end of the United Nations Decade of International Law would be held on 17 November 1999.*

Paragraph 3 (a) (Item 158 of the draft agenda)

118. *The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that item 158 should also be considered directly in plenary meeting.*

Paragraph 3(b) (Item 173 of the draft agenda)

119. *The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that item 173 should be considered directly in plenary meeting.*

Items proposed for consideration in plenary meeting

120. *The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the items proposed for consideration in plenary meeting, including sub-item (i) of item 17, items 97 (Question of East Timor), 158, 163, 166, 168 and 169, excluding item 63 (Question of Cyprus), and including its recommendations on one plenary meeting to commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of the operations of the United Nations Population Fund under item 100 (h), on four plenary meetings devoted to the follow-up to the 1998 International Year for Older Persons under item 107, on a one-day plenary meeting on 17 November 1999 to mark the end of the Decade of International Law under item 155 (a) and on item 110 (Advancement of women), should be allocated to the plenary Assembly.*

Items proposed for consideration by the First Committee

121. *The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the items proposed for consideration by the First Committee in the Secretary-General's memorandum should be allocated to that Committee.*

Items proposed for consideration by the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

122. *The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the items proposed for consideration by the Fourth Committee in the Secretary-General's memorandum should be allocated to that Committee, taking into account its decisions on the items entitled "Question of the Malagasy islands of Glorieuses, Juan de Nova, Europa and Bassas da India", "Question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas)" and "Question of East Timor".*

Items proposed for consideration by the Second Committee

123. *The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the items proposed for consideration by the Second Committee in the Secretary-General's memorandum should be allocated to that Committee.*

Items proposed for consideration by the Third Committee

124. *The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the items proposed for consideration by the Third Committee in the Secretary-General's memorandum should be allocated to that Committee.*

Items proposed for consideration by the Fifth Committee

125. *The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the items proposed for consideration by the Fifth Committee in the Secretary-General's memorandum should be allocated to that Committee.*

Items proposed for consideration by the Sixth Committee

126. *The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the items proposed for consideration by the Sixth Committee in the Secretary-General's memorandum should be allocated to that Committee.*

The meeting rose at 7.10 p.m.

United Nations A/BUR/54/SR.3

General Assembly
Fifty-fourth session

Official Records

Distr.: General
9 December 1999

Original: English

General Committee

Summary record of the 3rd meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 8 October 1999, at 9.15 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Gurirab ..... (Namibia)

Contents

Adoption of the agenda of the fifty-fourth regular session of the General Assembly and allocation of items (*continued*)

Request for the inclusion of an additional item submitted by Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal and Sao Tome and Principe

Request for the inclusion of an additional sub-item submitted by South Africa

Letter from the Chairman of the Second Committee addressed to the President of the General Assembly

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99-81478 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 9.25 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda of the fifty-fourth regular session of the General Assembly and allocation of items (*continued*)

Request for the inclusion of an additional item submitted by Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal and Sao Tome and Principe (A/54/232)

1. **The Chairman** invited the Committee to consider a request for the inclusion of an additional item entitled "Observer status for the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries in the General Assembly". The representative of Angola had asked to address the Committee in accordance with rule 43 of the rules of procedure.

2. *At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Van Dunem Mbinda (Angola) took a place at the Committee table.*

3. **Mr. Van Dunem Mbinda** (Angola) said that the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (CPLP) had been created in 1996 when the Heads of State and Government of Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, and Sao Tome and Principe, meeting in Lisbon, had decided to provide a response to the aspirations of the approximately 200 million people who considered the Portuguese language a means of communication, a historic link and a common heritage. They considered it imperative to consolidate the cultural identity of the Portuguese-speaking countries, while reflecting the special character of their relationship and cooperation over the years, to enhance the international identity of those countries, which, although geographically separated, shared a common language, and to reaffirm the commitment to strengthen their ties by taking concerted initiatives to promote their economic and social development and to disseminate the Portuguese language.

4. The Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries had established the Conference of Heads of State and Government, the Council of Ministers, the Standing Committee for Consultation and the Executive Secretariat to carry out its tasks. In order to pursue its objectives with greater efficiency and enhance cooperation, the status of observer in the General Assembly would be extremely beneficial.

5. *The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the item should be included in the agenda, and that it should be considered directly in plenary meeting.*

6. *Mr. Van Dunem Mbinda (Angola) withdrew.*

Request for the inclusion of an additional sub-item submitted by South Africa (A/54/233)

7. **The Chairman** invited the Committee to consider a request by South Africa for the inclusion of an additional sub-item entitled "Relocation of South Africa to the group of Member States set out in paragraph 3 (c) of General Assembly resolution 43/232". The representative of South Africa had asked to address the Committee in accordance with rule 43 of the rules of procedure.

8. *At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Kumalo (South Africa) took a place at the Committee table.*

9. **Mr. Kumalo** (South Africa) said that his Government had two reasons for making its request for relocation. First, a decision had been taken at the twelfth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries that members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and other developing countries should be classified no higher than group (c) in the scale of assessments for United Nations peacekeeping operations. Second, South Africa was in fact a developing country with an average yearly per capita gross national product of $3,400. South Africa's current location in category (b) was a historical anomaly which could be attributed to the misguided policy of the apartheid Government, which had sought to project South Africa as economically developed. However, the size of its economy, taken against the burdens of its social realities, made it impossible for South Africa to live beyond its means.

10. *The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the sub-item should be included in the agenda under item 151, and that it should be allocated to the Fifth Committee.*

11. *Mr. Kumalo (South Africa) withdrew.*

Letter from the Chairman of the Second Committee addressed to the President of the General Assembly (A/54/438)

12. **The Chairman** invited the Committee to consider a letter from the Chairman of the Second Committee concerning agenda item 101, "Operational activities for development of the United Nations system", proposing that sub-item (a) of that agenda item should be considered directly in plenary meeting, on the understanding that only the topic "Follow-up of the World Summit for Children" would be considered in plenary meeting.

13. *The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that agenda item 101 (a) should be considered directly in plenary meeting, on the understanding that only the topic "Follow-up of the World Summit for Children" would be considered in plenary meeting.*

The meeting rose at 9.40 a.m.

United Nations A/BUR/54/SR.4

General Assembly
Fifty-fourth session

Official Records

Distr.: General
8 December 1999

Original: English

General Committee

Summary record of the 4th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 24 November 1999, at 9 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Gurirab (President of the General Assembly) ..... (Namibia)
later: Mr. Ingólfsson (Vice-Chairman) ..... (Iceland)

Contents

Adoption of the agenda of the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly and allocation of items (*continued*)

Request for the inclusion of an additional item submitted by Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, India, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Spain, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Ukraine

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99-82583 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 9.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda of the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly and allocation of items (*continued*)

Request for the inclusion of an additional item submitted by Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, India, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Spain, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Ukraine (A/54/235)

1. **The Chairman** invited the Committee to consider a request by Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, India, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Spain, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Ukraine for the inclusion of an additional item entitled "International recognition of the Day of Vesak", contained in document A/54/235. The representatives of Sri Lanka, India, Spain, Bangladesh, Pakistan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Bhutan had asked to address the Committee in accordance with rule 43 of the rules of procedure.

2. *At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. de Saram (Sri Lanka), Mr. Sharma (India), Mr. Flores (Spain), Mr. Hossain (Bangladesh), Mr. Babar (Pakistan), Mr. Kittikhoun (Lao People's Democratic Republic) and Mr. Pradhan (Bhutan) took places at the Committee table.*

3. **Mr. de Saram** (Sri Lanka) said that the Day of Vesak, the holiest day of the year in Buddhism, was the Day of the Full Moon in the month of May on which Buddhists commemorated the birth, achievement of enlightenment and passing of the Buddha. There were over 150 million Buddhists worldwide, predominantly in Asia but also in many other regions of the world. The Buddha's message was one of compassion and humanity that superseded national and international differences; it was a philosophy that fully reflected the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

4. The explanatory memorandum and draft resolution contained in document A/54/235 provided the background to the request. The General Assembly should recognize the Day of Vesak and allow for appropriate arrangements to be made, without cost to the United Nations, for the international observance of Vesak at United Nations Headquarters and other United Nations offices in consultation with the relevant Secretariat officials and with Permanent Missions that might wish to be consulted. He hoped that the Committee would include the item on the agenda of the fifty-fourth session and refer it to the Assembly for consideration at a plenary meeting.

5. **Mr. Sharma** (India) said that his delegation associated itself fully with the statement made by the representative of Sri Lanka. The Buddha, whose teachings contained the message of universal compassion and peace, would always be a leading light to mankind, and nothing would be more appropriate than for the United Nations to commemorate his life and ideals. He therefore hoped that the Committee would accede to the request for the inclusion of the item in the agenda.

6. **Mr. Flores** (Spain) said that Spain was one of the 16 sponsors of the request for the inclusion of the additional item. The Organization's recognition of the special days celebrated by the world's various cultures and religions, including the Day of Vesak, would demonstrate its commitment to humanity's common spiritual heritage and help to promote understanding among different civilizations.

7. **Mr. Hossain** (Bangladesh) said that Bangladesh had strong historical ties with Buddhism and celebrated the Day of Vesak as a national holiday. The United Nations should recognize the Day of Vesak as a sacred day and observe it in an appropriate manner at Headquarters and its other offices all over the world. His delegation therefore urged the Committee to include the additional item in the agenda of the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly.

8. **Mr. Jayanama** (Thailand) said that his delegation associated itself fully with the statement made by the representative of Sri Lanka. As the world's largest predominantly Buddhist kingdom, Thailand called upon the General Committee to include the additional item in the agenda and refer it to the General Assembly for consideration in plenary meeting.

9. *Mr. Ingólfsson (Iceland), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.*

10. **Mr. Babar** (Pakistan) said that the holy Day of Vesak was celebrated in Asia and throughout the world by millions of people. By deciding to observe that Day, the United Nations would demonstrate its recognition of the widespread influence of Buddhism and its universal appeal. His delegation therefore hoped that the Committee would include the additional item in the agenda of the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly.

11. **Mr. Kittikhoun** (Lao People's Democratic Republic) said that it was only right that Buddhism, one of the world's great religions, should be recognized by the United Nations through the observance of the Day of Vesak. His delegation

therefore urged the Committee to decide to include the additional item in the agenda.

12. **Mr. Pradhan** (Bhutan) said that his delegation associated itself with the statement made by the representative of Sri Lanka and the other previous speakers. As a Buddhist kingdom, Bhutan was committed to the teachings of the Buddha, whose ideals were very similar to those of the Charter of the United Nations. His delegation hoped that the General Assembly would see fit to adopt the draft resolution contained in document A/54/235.

13. **Mr. Zackheos** (Cyprus) said the proposed additional item complemented item 34 of the agenda of the fifty-fourth session, entitled "Dialogue among civilizations". His delegation intended to become a sponsor of the draft resolution when it was considered by the General Assembly in plenary session.

14. *Mr. de Saram (Sri Lanka), Mr. Sharma (India), Mr. Flores (Spain), Mr. Hossain (Bangladesh), Mr. Babar (Pakistan), Mr. Kittikhoun (Lao People's Democratic Republic) and Mr. Pradhan (Bhutan) withdrew.*

15. *The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the item should be included in the agenda, and that it should be considered directly in plenary meeting.*

The meeting rose at 9.40 a.m.